

PROGRAM AND CONSTITUTION OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

This document is translated from a Russian pamphlet,
Program and Constitution of the Communist International, published by
LENPARIZDAT", Leningrad USSR, 1933.

CONSTITUTION

I. NAME AND OBJECT

1. The Communist International--the International Workers' Association is a UNION OF COMMUNIST PARTIES in various countries; it is the WORLD COMMUNIST PARTY, as the LEADER and ORGANIZER of the WORLD REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT of the proletariat and the PROTAGONIST of the PRINCIPLES of the working class and the broad strata of the property-less peasantry, fights for the establishment of the WORLD UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS, for the complete abolition of classes and for the achievement of Socialism-- the first stage of Communist society.
2. Each of the various Parties affiliated to the Communist International is called the Communist Party of(name and country), (Section of the Communist International). In any given country there can be ONLY ONE COMMUNIST PARTY affiliated to the Communist International and constituting its Section in that country.
3. Membership in the Communist Party and in the Communist International is open to all those who accept the program and rules of the respective Communist Party and of the Communist International, who join one of the

-2-

basic units of the Party, actively work in it, abide by all the decisions of the Party and of the Communist International, and pay Party dues.

4. The basic unit of the Communist Party organization is the place of employment (factory, workshop, mine, office, store, farm, and so forth) which unites all the Party members employed in the given enterprise.
5. The Communist International and its Sections are built up on the basis of democratic centralism, the fundamental principles of which are:
 - (a) election of all the leading committees of the Party, from the lowest to the highest (by general meetings of the Party members, conferences, congresses and International congresses);
 - (b) periodical reports by leading Party committees to their constituents;
 - (c) decisions of the higher Party organs to be obligatory for the lower organs, strict party discipline and prompt execution of the decisions of the Communists International, of its leading committees and of the leading Party centers.

Party questions may be discussed by the members of the Party and by Party organizations until such time as a decision is taken upon them by the competent Party organs. After a decision has been taken by the congress of the Communist International, by the congress of the respective Section, or by leading committee of the Comintern, and of its various Sections, the decision must be unreservedly carried out even if a part of the Party Membership or of the local Party organizations are in disagreement with it. In cases where a Party exist illegally, the higher Party committee may appoint the lower committees and co-opt members for their own committee, subject to subsequent endorsement by the competent higher Party committees.

6. In all non-Party workers' and peasants' mass organizations and in their leading committees (trade unions, co-operative societies, sport organizations, ex-servicemen organizations, and of their congresses and conferences) and also on municipal elective bodies and in parliament, even if there are only two Party members in such organizations and bodies, Communist factions must be formed for the purpose of strengthening the Party's influence and for carrying out its policy in these organizations and bodies.
7. The Communist factions are subordinated to the competent Party bodies.

Note: A. Communist factions in international organizations (Red International of Labor Unions (in United States known as the TUUL, Trade Union Unity League), International Labor Defense,

-3-

Workers International Relief (in United States known as the IWO, International Worker's Order) are subordinate to the executive Committee of the Communist International.

- B. The organizational structure of the Communist factions and the manner in which their work is guided are determined by special instructions from the executive committee of the Communist International and from the Central Committee of the respective Sections of the Comintern.

II. THE WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

8. The supreme body of the Communist International is the World Congress of representatives of all parties (Section) and organizations affiliated to the Communist International.

The World Congress discusses and decides the programmatic, tactical, and organizational questions connected with the activities of the Communist International and of its various Sections. Power to alter the program and Constitution of the Communist International lies exclusively with the World Congress of the Communist International.

The World Congress shall be convened once every two years. The date of the Congress and the number of representatives from various Sections to the Congress to be determined by the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

The number of decisive votes to be allocated to each Section at the World Congress shall be determined by the special decision of the Congress itself, in accordance with the membership of the respective country. Delegates to the Congress must have a free mandate; no imperative mandate can be recognized.

9. Special Congresses of the Communist International shall be convened on the demand of Parties which at the preceding World Congress had an aggregate of not less than one-half of decisive votes.
10. The World Congress elects the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) and the International Control Commission (ICC).
11. The location of the headquarters of the Executive Committee is decided on by the World Congress.

III. THE EXECUTIVE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

12. The leading body of the Communist International in the period between Congresses is the Executive Committee, which gives instructions to all the Sections of the Communist International and controls their activity.

-4-

The ECCI publishes the central organ of the Communist International in not less than four languages.

13. The decision of the ECCI are obligatory for all the Sections of the Communist International and must be promptly carried out.
14. The Central Committees of the various Sections of the Communist International are responsible to their respective Party Congresses and to the ECCI. The latter has the right to annul or amend decisions of Party Congresses and of Central Committees of Parties.
15. The ECCI has the right to expel from the Communist International, entire Sections, groups and individual members who violate the program and constitution of the Communist International or the decision of the World Congress or of the ECCI.
16. The programs of the various Sections of the Communist International must be endorsed by the ECCI.
17. The ECCI has the right to accept affiliation to the Communist International of organizations and Parties sympathetic to Communism, such organizations to have a consultative voice.
18. The ECCI elects a Presidium responsible to the ECCI which acts as the permanent body carrying out all the business of the ECCI in the interval between the meeting of the latter.
19. The ECCI and its Presidium have the right to establish permanent bureaus (Western European, South American, Eastern, and other Bureaus of the ECCI), for the purpose of establishing closer contact with the various Sections of the Communist International and in order to be better able to guide their work.

Note: The scope of the activities of the permanent bureaus of the ECCI shall be determined by the ECCI or by its Presidium. The Sections of the Communist International which come within the scope of activities of the permanent bureaus of the ECCI must be informed of the powers conferred on those bureaus.

20. The Sections must carry out the instructions of the permanent bureaus of the ECCI.
21. The ECCI and its Presidium have the right to send their representatives to the various Sections of the Communist International. Such representatives receive their instructions from the ECCI or from its Presidium, and are responsible to them for their activities. Representatives of the ECCI have the right to participate in meetings of the Central Party bodies as well as of the local organizations of the Sections to

-5-

which they are sent. Representatives of the ECCI must carry out their commission in close contact with the Central Committee of the Section to which they are sent. They may, however, speak in opposition to the Central Committee of the given Section, if the line of the Central Committee in question diverges from the instructions of the ECCI. Representatives of the ECCI are especially obliged to supervise the carrying out the decisions of the World Congresses and of the ECCI.

The ECCI and its Presidium also have the right to send instructors to the various Sections of the Communist International. The powers and duties of instructors are determined by the ECCI to whom the instructors are responsible in their work. On the France Communist Party Convention last fall Earl Browder was elected as honorary Chairman, which means that next to Stalin he is of the Presidium in the rest of the Countries.

22. Meetings of the ECCI must take place not less than once every six months.
23. Meetings of the Presidium of the ECCI must take place not less than once a fortnight.
24. The Presidium elects the Political Secretariat, which is imposed to make decisions, and which also draws up proposals for the meetings of the ECCI and of its Presidium, and acts as their executive body.
25. The Presidium appoints the editorial committees of the periodical and other publications of the Communist International.
26. The Presidium of the ECCI sets up a department for Work among Women Workers, permanent committee for guiding the work of definite groups of Sections of the Communist International and other departments of work.

IV. THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION

27. The International Control Commission investigates matters affecting the unity of the Sections affiliated to the Communist International and also matters connected with Communist conduct of individual members of the various Sections. For this purpose the ICC:
 - a. Examines complaints against the actions of Central Committees of Communist Parties lodged by Party members who have been subjected to disciplinary measures for political differences.
 - b. Examines such analogous matters concerning members of central bodies of Communist Parties and of individual Party members as it deems necessary, or which are submitted to it by the deciding bodies of the ECCI.
 - c. Audits the accounts of the Communist International.

-6-

The headquarters of the ICC are fixed by the ICC in agreement with the ECCI.

V. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SECTIONS
OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND THE ECCI

28. The Central Committees of Sections affiliated to the Communist International and the Central Committees affiliated sympathizing organizations must send to the ECCI the minutes of their meetings and reports of their work.
29. Resignations from office by individual members or groups of members of Central Committees of the various Sections is regarded as disruptive of the Communist movement. Leading post in the Party do not belong to the occupant of that post, but to the Communist International, as a whole. Elected members of the Central leading bodies of the various Sections may resign before their time of office expires only with the consent of the ECCI. Resignations accepted by Central Committees of Sections without the consent of the ECCI are invalid.
30. The Sections affiliated to the Communist International must maintain close organizational and informational contact with each other, arrange for mutual representation at each other's conferences and congresses, and with consent of the ECCI exchange leading comrades. This applies particularly to the Sections in imperialist countries and their colonies, and to the Sections in countries adjacent to each other.
31. Two or more Sections of the Communist International which (like the Sections in the Scandinavian countries and in the Balkans) are politically connected with each other by common conditions of struggle, may, with the consent of the ECCI form federations for the purpose of co-ordinating their activities, such federations to work under the guidance and control of the ECCI.
32. The Sections of the Comintern must regularly pay affiliation dues to the ECCI; the amount of such dues to be determined by the ECCI.
33. Congresses of the various Sections, ordinary and special, can be convened only with the consent of the ECCI.

In the event of a Section failing to convene a Party Congress prior to the convening of a World Congress, that Section, before electing delegates to the World Congress, must convene a Party conference, or plenum of its Central Committee, for the purpose of considering the questions that are to come before the World Congress.
34. The International League of Communist Youth (Communist Youth International) is a Section of the Communist International with full rights and is subordinate to the ECCI.

-7-

35. The Communist Parties must be prepared for transition to illegal conditions. The ECCI must render the Parties concerned assistance in their preparations for transition to illegal conditions.

36. Individual members of Sections of the Communist International may pass from one country to another only with the consent of the Central Committee of the Section of which they are members.

Communists changing their domicile must join the Section in the country of their new domicile. Communists leaving their country without the consent of the Central Committee of their Section must not be accepted into other Sections of the Communist International.

PARTS OF THE PROGRAM OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

(adopted at the forty-sixth session of the sixth World Congress of the Communist International, September 1, 1928) Reprinted in the United States, February, 1936.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ULTIMATE AIM OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL WORLD COMMUNISM

The ultimate aim of the Communist International is to replace world capitalist economy by a world Communist society.

CHAPTER FOUR

"Proletarian revolution, signifies the forcible invasion of the proletariat into the domain of property relationships of bourgeois society."

"The conquest of power by the proletariat does not mean peacefully 'capturing' the ready-made bourgeois state machinery by means of a parliamentary majority. The conquest of power by the proletariat is the violent overthrow of bourgeois power, the destruction of the capitalist state apparatus (bourgeois armies, police, bureaucratic hierarchy, the judiciary, parliaments, and so forth) and substituting in its place new organs of proletarian power."

"The Soviet form of state, being the highest form of Democracy, namely, proletarian democracy."

"The confiscation of all large private capitalist undertakings (factories, plants, mines) and the transference of all state and municipal enter-

-8-

"The confiscation of railway, waterway, automobile, and air transport services, commercial and passenger air fleet, telegraphs, telephones, and wireless, and the transference of state and municipal transport and communication services to the Soviets."

"The confiscation of all landed estates in town and country (private, church, monastery, and other lands)."

"Monopoly of foreign trade. The repudiation of state debts to foreign and home capitalist."

"The dictatorship of the proletariat is a continuation of the class struggle under new conditions. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a stubborn fight--bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, pedagogical and administrative--against the forces and traditions of the old society."

"In destroying the capitalist monopoly of the means of production, the working class must also destroy the capitalist monopoly of education, that is, it must take possession of all the schools, from the elementary schools to the universities."

"One of the most important tasks of the cultural revolution affecting the wide masses is the task of systematically and unswervingly combating religion--the opium of the people."

(9)

CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION TO THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The Second Congress of the Communist International rules that the conditions for joining the Communist International shall be as follows:"

"1. The general propaganda and agitation should bear a really Communist character, and should correspond to the programme and decisions of the Third International. The entire party press should be edited by reliable Communists who have proved their loyalty to the cause of the proletarian revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat should not be spoken of simply as a current hackneyed formula, it should be advocated in such a way that its necessity should be apparent to every rank-and-file working man and woman, to each soldier and peasant, and should emanate from everyday facts systematically recorded by our press day by day.

All periodicals and other publications, as well as all party publications and editions, are subject to the control of the presidium of the party, independently of whether the party is legal or illegal. The editors should in no way be given an opportunity to abuse their autonomy and carry on a policy not fully corresponding to the policy of the party.

Wherever the followers of the Third International have access, and whatever means of propaganda are at their disposal, whether the column of newspapers, popular meeting, labor union or co-operative,--it is indispensable for them not only to denounce the bourgeoisie, but also its assistants and agents-- reformists of every color and shade.

"2. Every organization desiring to join the Communist International shall be bound systematically and regularly to remove from all the responsible posts in the labor movement (Party Organizations, editors, labor unions, parliamentary factions, co-operatives, municipalities, etc.), all reformists and followers of the "centre", and to have them replaced by Communists, even at the cost of replacing at the beginning "experienced" men by rank-and-file working men."

(10)

"3. The class struggle in almost every country of Europe and America is entering the phase of civil war. Under such conditions the Communist can have no confidence in bourgeois laws. They should create everywhere a parallel illegal apparatus, which at the decisive moment should do its duty by the party, and in every way possible assist the revolution. In every country where, in consequence of martial law or of other exceptional laws, the Communists are unable to carry on their work lawfully, a combination of lawful and unlawful work is absolutely necessary."

"4. A persistent and systematic propaganda and agitation is necessary in the army, where Communist groups should be formed in every military organization. Wherever, owing to repressive legislation, agitation becomes impossible, it is necessary to carry on such agitation illegally. But refusal to carry on or participate in such work should be considered equal to treason to the revolutionary cause, and incompatible with affiliation with the Third International."

"5. A systematic and regular propaganda is necessary in the rural districts. The working class can gain no victory unless it possesses the sympathy and support of at least part of the rural workers and of the poor peasants, and unless other sections of the population are equally utilized. Communist work in the rural districts is acquiring a predominant importance during the present period. It should be carried on through Communist workmen of both city and country who have connections with the rural districts. To refuse to do this work, or to transfer such work to untrustworthy half reformists, is equal to renouncing the proletarian revolution."

"6. Every party desirous of affiliating with the Third International should renounce not only avowed social patriotism, but also the falsehood and the hypocrisy of social pacifism, it should systematically demonstrate to the workers that without a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism no international arbitration, no talk of disarmament, no democratic reorganization of the League of Nations will be capable of saving mankind from new Imperialist wars."

(11)

"7. Parties desirous of joining the Communist International must recognize the necessity of a complete and absolute rupture with reformism and the policy of the "centrists", and must advocate this rupture amongst the widest circles of the party membership, without which condition a consistent Communist policy is impossible. The Communist International demands unconditionally and peremptorily that such rupture be brought about with the least possible delay. The Communist International cannot reconcile itself to the fact that such avowed reformists as for instance Turati, Hodigliani, Kautsky, Hillquit, Longuet, Macdonald and others should be entitled to consider themselves members of the Third International. This would make the Third International resemble the Second International."

"8. In the Colonial question and that of the oppressed nationalities there is necessary an especially distinct and clear line of conduct of the parties of countries where the bourgeoisie possesses such colonies or oppresses other nationalities. Every party desirous of belonging to the Third International should be bound to denounce without any reserve all the methods of "its own" Imperialists in the colonies, supporting not only in words but practically a movement of liberation in the colonies. It should demand the expulsion of its own Imperialists from such colonies and oppressed nationalities, and carry on a systematic agitation in its own army against every kind of oppression of the colonial population."

"9. Every party desirous of belonging to the Communist International should be bound to carry on systematic and persistent Communist work in the labor unions, co-operatives and other labor organizations of the masses. It is necessary to form Communist groups within the organizations, which by persistent and lasting work should win over labor unions to Communism. These groups should constantly denounce the treachery of the social patriots and the fluctuations of the "centre". These Communist groups should be completely subordinated to the party in general."

"10. Any party belonging to the Communist International is bound to carry on a stubborn struggle against the Amsterdam "International" of the yellow labor unions. It should propagate insistently amongst the organized workers the necessity of a rupture with the yellow Amsterdam International. It should

(12)

support by all means in its power the International Unification of Red Labor Unions, adhering to the Communist International which is now beginning."

"11. Parties desirous of joining the Third International shall be bound to inspect the personnel of their parliamentary factions, to remove all unreliable elements therefrom, to control such factions, not only verbally but in reality, to subordinate them to the Central Committee of the party, and to demand from each proletarian Communist that he devote his entire activity to the interests of real revolutionary propaganda."

"12. All parties belonging to the Communist International should be formed on the basis of the principle of democratic centralization. At the present time of acute civil war the Communist Party will be able fully to do its duty only when it is organized in a sufficiently thorough way, when it possesses an iron discipline, and when its party centre enjoys the confidence of the members of the party, who are to endow this centre with complete power, authority and ample rights."

"13. The Communist parties of those countries where the Communist activity is legal, should make a clearance of their members from time to time, as well as those of the party organizations, in order systematically to free the party from the petty bourgeois elements which penetrate into it."

"14. Each party desirous of affiliating with the Communist International should be obliged to render every possible assistance to the Soviet Republics in their struggle against all counter-revolutionary forces. The Communist parties should carry on a precise and definite propaganda to induce the workers to refuse to transport any kind of military equipment intended for fighting against the Soviet Republics, and should also by legal or illegal means carry on a propaganda amongst the troops sent against the workers' republics, etc."

"15. All those parties which up to the present moment have stood upon the old social and democratic programmes should, within the shortest time possible, draw up a new Communist programme in conformity with the special conditions of their country, and in accordance with the

(13)

resolutions of the Communist International. As a rule, the programme of each party belonging to the Communist International should be confirmed by the next congress of the Communist International or its Executive Committee of the Communist International, the said party shall be entitled to appeal to the Congress of the Communist International."

"16. All the resolutions of the congresses of the Communist International, as well as the resolutions of the Executive Committee are binding for all parties joining the Communist International. The Communist International, operating under the conditions of most acute civil warfare, should be centralized in a better manner than the Second International. At the same time, the Communist International and the Executive Committee are naturally bound in every form of their activity to consider the variety of conditions under which the different parties have to work and struggle, and generally binding resolutions should be passed only on such questions upon which such resolutions are possible."

"17. In connection with the above, all parties desiring to join the Communist International should alter their name. Each party desirous of joining the Communist International should bear the following name: Communist Party of such and such a country, section of the Third Communist International. The question of the renaming of a party is not only a formal one, but is a political question of great importance. The Communist International has declared a decisive war against the entire bourgeois world, and all the yellow Social Democratic parties. It is indispensable that every rank-and-file worker should be able clearly to distinguish between the Communist parties and the old official "Social Democratic" or "Socialist" parties, which have betrayed the cause of the working class."

"18. All the leading organs of the press of every party are bound to publish all the most important documents of the Executive Committee of the Communist International."

"19. All those parties which have joined the Communist International, as well as those which have expressed a desire to do so, are obliged in as short a space of time as possible, and

(14)

in no case later than four months after the Second Congress of the Communist International, to convene an Extraordinary Congress in order to discuss these conditions. In addition to this, the Central Committees of these parties should take care to acquaint all the local organizations with the regulations of the Second Congress."

"20. All those parties which at the present time are willing to join the Third International, but have so far not changed their tactics in any radical manner, should prior to their joining the Third International, take care that not less than two-thirds of their committee members and all their central institutions should be composed of comrades who have made an open and definite declaration prior to the convening of the Second Congress, as to their desire that the party should affiliate with the Third International. The Executive Committee of the Communist International has the right to make an exception also for the representative of the "centre" as mentioned in paragraph 7."

"21. Those members of the party who reject the conditions and the theses of the Third International, are liable to be excluded from the party."

(Theses and Statutes of the Third
(Communist) International
Pages 27-32)
Adopted by the Second Congress,
July 17th - August 7th, 1920.